



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

PRESENTATION

OF THE

GOLD MEDALS

TO THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE LATE RICHARD O'HARA BURKE
AND TO CAPTAIN BLAKISTON, R.A.

THE PRESIDENT said—The first duty which I have to perform is to present the medals. But before I do so I may, perhaps, be allowed to remind you that these honours are not the gift of a society of private gentlemen, who have assumed to themselves the right of so distinguishing certain merits of their own selection, according to rules fixed by their own good pleasure; these medals are the gift of that supreme authority of this realm which is the source of all public honour and distinction. And just as peerages and knighthoods are given by the Crown, at the instance of the Prime Minister; just as Victoria Crosses are given by the Crown, at the instance of the Commander-in-Chief; so the Crown has selected the President and Council of the Royal Geographical Society to award the honours which it considers to be due to those who have most distinguished themselves by the promotion of geographical science and discovery.

If you will look back to our records, you will see that this Royal trust has been fulfilled by the President and Council of the Royal Geographical Society with scrupulous fidelity; you will find no trace of political bias, or of personal favour, or of what is more difficult to resist, the influence of popular sympathies. Now it is this distinction, proceeding from the highest power of the realm, and assigned by the most competent and impartial judges, that I am about to present.

I will request Dr. Norton Shaw to read the formal judicial decision, by which the Council of the Royal Geographical Society has awarded the Founder's premium for this year.

Dr. Shaw then read as follows:—"The Founder's Gold Medal has been awarded to the representative of the late Richard O'Hara

Burke, in remembrance of that gallant explorer, who, with his companions Wills and Gray, perished after having traversed the continent of Australia from south to north. The Council has also awarded to Mr. John King, the sole survivor of the expedition under Burke, a gold watch, with a suitable inscription, as a recompence for his faithful and meritorious conduct."

The President then addressed the Duke of Newcastle, her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, as follows :—

"My LORD DUKE,—We rejoice to see you here within our walls, that we may have the opportunity of testifying to you our thanks for the cordial and liberal manner in which you have accepted the co-operation of this Society, whenever we could in any way contribute to the public service. The colonies over which you preside, must see in your presence this day, new evidence of the interest taken by Her Majesty's Government in every event which bears upon their permanent welfare; and there have been few events within the history of our Australian colonies, destined to have a more beneficial influence upon their progress, than this passage from sea to sea by the expedition of the late Mr. Burke.

"I consign this medal to your hands, to be delivered to his nearest relative. Oh! that this posthumous tribute of a nation's gratitude could in any way assuage the sorrow and mitigate the bereavement of the many friends and admirers whom he has left to bewail his loss."

The DUKE OF NEWCASTLE assured the meeting that he attended there in fulfilment of what he considered a public duty, at once painful and agreeable—painful because he received at the hands of the President this token of admiration of one of England's noble men, for transmission not to him for whose merits it had been bestowed, and who was now cold on the shores of that great country on which he had conferred such signal benefits, but to those relatives who, like the colony itself, must look back upon his memory with affectionate admiration. At the same time it was an agreeable duty, because it showed that this Society, as well as the country at large, had not been insensible to the merits of the individual or the services he had rendered to science and civilization. These medals, as it had been correctly stated by the Chairman, were not conferred at the option of private individuals, but by the Crown, through the instrumentality of the President and Fellows of this Society; but the medals must bear an additional value when it was recollected that they were not bestowed upon any arbitrary principles, but by gentlemen eminent for their knowledge and experience, and who were thoroughly com-

petent to appreciate the merit they rewarded. Standing before them as he did, entrusted by Her Majesty with the seals of the Colonial Office, he felt bound to express his admiration of the colony of Victoria in instituting this expedition. Victoria was perhaps one of the Australian colonies least interested in the result of Mr. Burke's expedition; at the same time it entered upon it with that public spirit which had actuated this country in similar expeditions—a desire to benefit science and to extend civilization throughout Australia, of which the colony of Victoria formed so important a part. But if credit was due to Victoria for this, it was also due to the other colonies to acknowledge that they also set on foot expeditions when the fate of Mr. Burke was held in the balance, and when it was hoped that expeditions might afford aid, or probably effect his rescue. It would be unnecessary to say much upon the individual merits of Mr. Burke, for most of those present had read that touching despatch of Sir Henry Barkly in which he narrated the circumstances of Mr. Burke's untimely fate. In him they had lost a man as eminent, as gallant, and as great as that intrepid brother who perished on the banks of the Danube. He felt certain that the Society had done well in awarding its medal to so distinguished an explorer. It would not be proper for him to pledge the Colonial Office to anything on such an occasion, but he would say that on all such matters as this, the authorities of his office looked to the Royal Geographical Society as a guide and instructor, and, although it might not be always possible to follow what was suggested, it would always be with great deference that they received suggestions, and with great reluctance that they were unable to carry them out. On the part of the friends of Mr. Burke he thanked the Society, and assured them that the medal should be duly transmitted to them.

At the desire of the President, the terms of the award of the Patron's Gold Medal were then read by Dr. Shaw:—"The Patron's Gold Medal has been awarded to Captain Thomas Blakiston, of the Royal Artillery, for his survey of the river Yang-tsze-Kiang, from Yo-chow to Ping-shan, extending nine hundred miles beyond the farthest point previously reached by Englishmen."

The PRESIDENT then said,—

"CAPTAIN BLAKISTON,—Having already had the pleasure of being acquainted with you in private life, I rejoice that it should be from my hands that you receive this honourable distinction, awarded you by the Council of the Royal Geographical Society."

CAPTAIN BLAKISTON, expressed his gratification at receiving the medal, but regretted that in a private expedition any distinction had to be made. He wished that it could be divided into four portions, so that each of his companions might receive a share ; but that not being possible, he should consider that he held it in trust for them.

He tendered his thanks to the President and Council for the award, and to the members present for their flattering reception, and concluded by saying that he should ever remember that the “Upper Yang-tsze Expedition” had gained one of the highest honours accessible to geographers.
